

latter custom goes with cannibalism in the Congo region, and is also characteristic of the more gifted, beautiful, and alert tribes.¹ None of the coast tribes of West Africa eat human flesh, but the interior tribes eat any corpse regardless of the cause of death. Families hesitate to eat their own dead, but they sell or exchange them for the dead of other families.² In the whole Congo region the custom exists, especially amongst the warlike tribes, who eat not only war captives but slaves.³

It is noteworthy that a fork⁴ was invented in Polynesia for this kind of food, long before the fork was used for any other.

340. Cannibalism not abominable. Spix and Martins⁵ asked a chief of the Miranhas why his people practiced cannibalism.

The chief showed that it was entirely a new fact to him that some people thought it an abominable custom. "You whites/" said he, "will not eat crocodiles or apes, although they taste well. If you did not have so many pigs and crabs you would eat crocodiles and apes, for hunger hurts. It is all a matter of habit.

When I have killed an enemy it is better to eat him than to let him go to waste. Big game is rare because it does not lay eggs like turtles. The bad thing is not being eaten, but death, if I am slain, whether our tribal enemy eats me or not. I know of no game which tastes better than men. You whites are really too dainty.*

341. In-group cannibalism. Cannibalism was so primordial in the mores that it has two forms, one for the in-group, the other for the out-group. It had a theory of affection in the former case and of enmity in the latter. In the in-group it was so far from being an act of hostility, or veiled impropriety, that it was applied to the closest kin. Mothers ate their babies, if the latter died, in order to get back the strength which they had lost in bearing them.

Herodotus says that the Massagetas sacrificed the old of their tribe, boiling the flesh of the men with that of cattle and eating the whole. Those who died of disease before attaining old age were buried, but that they thought a less happy fate. He says that the Padeans, men in the far east of India, put a sick man of their tribe to death and ate him, lest his flesh should be wasted by disease. The women did the same by a sick woman. If any reach old age without falling victims to this custom, they too are then killed

¹ *Globus*, LXXXV, 229.

⁸ *Gloku*, LXXII, 120 ; LXXXVII,

237.

² Nassau, *Fetishism in West Africa*, u. ⁴ Specimen in the Dresden Museum.

⁵ *Brasilien* ^ 1249.